

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dinwiddie Presbyterian Church and Cemetery
other names/site number 017-5015

2. Location

street & number 2698 Homestead Rd. not for publication
city or town Hillsville vicinity X
state Virginia code VA county Carroll code 035 Zip 24343

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the National Register

 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceDinwiddie Presbyterian Church and Cemetery
Carroll County, Virginia

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> buildings
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Reverend Robert Childress Presbyterian Rock Churches, MPD

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Religion Sub: religious facility
 funerary cemetery

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Religion Sub: religious facility
 funerary cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) Gothic Revival **Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
roof asphalt
walls stone
other wood

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Dinwiddie Presbyterian Church and Cemetery
Carroll County, Virginia

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☒ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☒ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) Religion, Social History, Architecture

Period of Significance 1948-1956

Significant Dates 1948

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Childress, Rev. Robert
Slate, Richard

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

(Rev. 10-90)

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceDinwiddie Presbyterian Church and Cemetery
Carroll County, Virginia

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property approx. 1.2 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing				
1.	17	525169E	407950N	2.	17	525253E	4079523N	3.	17	525273E	4079465N	4.	17	525189E	4079450N

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Randle Brim, John Kern, and Michael Pulice
Organization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources date December, 2005
street & number: 1030 Penmar Ave SE telephone 540-857-7586
city or town Roanoke state VA zip code 24013

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Dinwiddie Presbyterian Church (no contact listed with county treasurer)
street & number 2698 Homestead Rd. telephone _____
city or town Hillsville state VA zip code 24343

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Description

Summary and Site

The Dinwiddie Church, built of fieldstone in 1948, is located in Carroll County, on approximately 1.2 acres, on the north side of county route 750 (Homestead Road), and just east of the intersection of 750 and Route 752, known as Mitchell Crossroads. The abbreviated name, "Dinwiddie Ch" appears on USGS topographic maps (Hillsville quadrangle). The church grounds include a large cemetery, which is considered a *contributing site* for the purposes of this nomination. It is situated at the highest point in the area, above 2636 feet in elevation. The church is located on a gentle slope just below the cemetery and to the west. From the church grounds, far-off mountain peaks are visible in all directions. Closer by are cleared pasturelands and a few residences along the roadways.

Description

The entire Dinwiddie Church is constructed of frame with a quartzitic fieldstone exterior, and is covered with brownish-red asphalt shingle roofs. Originally the church building was composed of a 1 ½-story front-gabled, wide, rectangular-plan main block with front entry bell tower and a narrow gable-roofed transept near the north (rear) end of the main block. The main block is front-gabled with nave plan and Gothic-style tower at the front, through which the edifice is entered. The tower has corner parapets with crenellations of jagged, light-colored stone fragments between each corner. The front entry is compass-headed, with a double-leaf door and lighted, round-arched transom. Near the top of the tower, on the front and both sides, are triangular-headed louvered vent openings that are about the same size and shape as the windows on the front of the church. There is one triangular-headed window to each side of the tower, lighting the front part of the sanctuary. On both long sides of the sanctuary, between bays with triangular headed windows, are thick fieldstone buttresses with concrete copings.

Connected to the west end of the transept and set back perhaps 20 feet or more from the main block's front elevation, is a 1 ½-story, front-gabled addition with fieldstone-faced front elevation, but brick-veneered side and rear elevations, and its own front entry--single-leaf front door on the front elevation near the north corner, approached by a short flight of concrete steps, and a smaller version of the triangular-arched windows found in the larger (sanctuary) block, nearly centered on the front

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elevation. High in the gable end of the appendage is a triangular-headed louvered vent like those in the tower. A modern one-story, hip-roofed, brick-veneered addition is attached to the rear elevation of the main block and the east elevation of the fieldstone-faced addition. Out in front of the church is a reader-board sign encased in fieldstone, with its own jagged stone crenellations. The interior of the sanctuary has exposed roof trusses constructed of massive pine timbers, and a viewing gallery recessed behind the dais. The walls are treated with vertical knotty-pine paneling. The alter and area behind it are treated with flush-laid natural stone and mortar, including the podium, a decorative knee wall, and corner pillars.

Cemetery

Dinwiddie Cemetery's enclosure is similar to Bluemont's, with a large number of closely-spaced, robust, pillars and heavy, painted chains between them. The masonry pillars of fieldstone match the church exterior, and are connected by two metal poles. The tops of the pillars are pyramidal.

8. Statement of Significance

Summary and Justification of Criteria

Dinwiddie Presbyterian Church is one of the six Childress rock-faced churches located in the Virginia counties of Floyd, Carroll, and Patrick, built between 1919 and the early 1950s by Presbyterian minister Robert W. Childress. The six churches are significant in their embodiment of Appalachian patterns of Presbyterian religious worship and Presbyterian social activism in western Virginia. The churches also tell the story of the remarkable ministry of Robert W. Childress, who brought spiritual faith and social awakening to the people of the central portion of the Blue Ridge Province in Virginia. As such, the Dinwiddie Church is significant under Criterion A in the areas of Religion and Social History, and under Criterion C for its unique architecture. The period of significance is from 1948, the year of its construction, to 1956, the year of Robert Childress's death.

Historical Background

Dinwiddie Presbyterian Church, built in Carroll County of fieldstone in 1948, stands at the farthest distance, about thirteen miles, northwest of the mother church at Buffalo Mountain.

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When James “Arthur” Mitchell returned to Mitchell Crossroads after World War II, he sought to
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revive the Dinwiddie Presbyterian congregation that had languished for decades as the least funded and least active church body in the Abingdon Presbytery.¹ Mitchell asked Richard Slate, then a young man plowing in a field, to “come back and help re-establish the church.” Mitchell also asked Dr. Goodridge Wilson of the Abingdon Presbytery to contact Bob Childress to hold services with the Dinwiddie congregation to revive the church.

At the end of the first service Childress held in the old school building used by the Dinwiddie Presbyterians, he received a collection of \$5.60. Richard Slate still remembers Childress’s immediate response and challenge: “That’s not enough money for me, let’s put it in a building fund.” Dinwiddie elder J. A. Mitchell then wrote a letter to Childress inviting him to come back as their pastor and help them build a church. As soon as Childress returned in May 1946, he began to build a new church. Building committee members were J. R. Slate, chair; Miss Willie K. Mitchell, secretary; J. A. Mitchell, treasurer; and J. H. Wright and Richard P. Slate.

Work on the church foundation began in July 1946 without architects or plans. Childress and Slate laid out the building foundation footprint by tape measuring and stepping it off. Most of the field rock came from Buffalo Mountain and was hauled in a World War II Weapons Carrier that Childress had purchased from army surplus. Granite shavings for mortar were hauled by the Weapons Carrier in ten loads from Flat Rock Quarry near Mount Airy, North Carolina. When funds ran short, Childress brought Slate with him to meet with an owner of the *Roanoke Times* and drove her to the church site, asking her, “What do you think of the church building? Isn’t it wonderful? Isn’t it beautiful? Isn’t it wonderful enough to have a roof?” The next day a truckload of shingles arrived at the church from an anonymous donor. Richard Slate remembers that Childress specifically directed interior construction of the fieldstone altar and pulpit, which remain unchanged today. The first service at the new Dinwiddie Church was held in September 1948. In 1953 Childress purchased an acre of adjoining property from Carroll County at a public auction in Hillsville for \$2,000, a price far beyond the church’s budget. Childress paid for the purchase with a personal loan from the Bank of Floyd. Much of the information on Dinwiddie comes from Randle Brim’s extensive interview with Richard Slate, who has served as an elder at Dinwiddie for almost sixty years since his installation in 1947.²

Endnotes

1. Minutes of Abingdon Presbytery, 1925-1944, Wytheville, Virginia.
2. Brim, *Simple Pleasures*, October 2004, and personal communication, September 2005.

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9. Bibliography

Abingdon Presbytery, Wytheville, Virginia. Published minutes, 1916-1944.

Brim, Randle. "Biggest Rock Church isn't on Parkway." *Mount Airy News*, Simple Pleasures section. Vol. IX, No. 7, October 2004; 5-8, 12, 14-16.

Brim, Randle. "Dinwiddie Community is Home to First Rock Church." *Mount Airy News*, Simple Pleasures section, Vol. IX, No. 8, Simple Pleasures. November 2004 16, 19-20.
Carroll County, Commissioner of Revenue, Tax Valuation Record. Hillsville, Virginia.

Davids, Richard C. *The Man Who Moved a Mountain*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970.
Paperback edition, 1972.

Nance, Donald, formerly with Abingdon Presbytery, Wytheville, Virginia. Personal communication, August 2005.

Slate, Richard, elder of Dinwiddie Presbyterian Church since 1947. Personal communication, September 2005.

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated parcel includes only the church and cemetery and the immediate grounds around them, as shown on the accompanying GIS-produced aerial image. The following UTM points designate the boundary polygon as it is being nominated: 1. 17 525169E 407950N
2. 17 525253E 4079523N 3. 17 525273E 4079465N 4. 17 525189E 4079450N

Boundary Justification

The nominated parcel boundary corresponds exactly to that of the original church and cemetery parcel.

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Photographs

Dinwiddie Presbyterian Church (DHR #017-5015)
Carroll County, Virginia
Date: December 2005
Photographer: Michael J. Pulice
Negative No. 22018

1. Church principal facade, facing north.
 2. Church exterior, facing northeast.
 3. Church exterior, facing northwest.
 4. Church interior, facing rear of church.
 5. Church interior, facing front of church from gallery.
 6. Cemetery, facing east.
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